

3 November 1987

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Media Contact with Bob Woodward

1. On 11/2/87 Bob Woodward, WASHINGTON POST, advised that he, working together with reporter Walter Pincus, is writing an article to precede the Iran-contra report coming from the combined committees. Woodward advised that he has talked with many members of the committee and their staffers--specifically, in an interview with Chairman of the Senate Committee on Intelligence Boren, the Chairman presented several issues to Woodward. Woodward in turn would like comments as appropriate from CIA.

a) Boren advised Woodward that the Senate intelligence committee currently reviews and monitors existing covert actions on a weekly basis.

b) Boren advised Woodward that in scheduled meetings attended by ranking minority member Cohen, the DCI and the DDCI, the issue of liaison with foreign nations was discussed. Woodward inquired whether this was a departure from previous Agency policy not to discuss foreign liaison with the oversight committees.

c) Boren advised that he intended to hold hearings on intelligence analysis to assure that the process of production of intelligence estimates is one that will not be subject to skewing of the intelligence. Senator Boren advised Woodward that he was convinced previous DCI Casey had "cooked the books." According to Woodward the hearings mentioned by Boren concerning intelligence analysis would be conducted in closed session.

d) Boren related that on several occasions ideas were presented to him prior to presentation of a covert action. Woodward inquired whether such a process eroded the executive authority upon which covert action findings are based.

2. Boren related to Woodward that he had almost total and absolute confidence in the DCI and that much has already been established to create mutual trust in the contacts between the DDCI, the DCI and the oversight committee.

3. In information gleaned from other committee members, Woodward has determined that there is some opinion that there is too much "rump" oversight existing between the meetings by the DCI, DDCI and Senators Cohen and Boren.

4. Senator Cohen advised in an interview with the POST that DCI Webster is the right man for the important job of DCI at this time. He related that Webster is walking a tightrope in an effort to determine necessary policy changes and also address not catering to long-established institutional habits of the Agency. Concerning the DDCI, Woodward learned from Cohen that the Senator is supportive of the DDCI, but believes that he was not forceful enough in asserting himself against former DCI Casey.

5. Senator Cohen advised that on a number of occasions during the Iran-contra investigation when the staff believed the CIA was foot-dragging, he or Senator Boren telephoned Agency leadership to get things moving.

6. Woodward related that one of his key sources for material in this article that he is preparing is a Senate staff member who has been deeply involved in the preparation of the Iran-contra report. The article will state that the report will be critical of the CIA. According to remarks attributed to Senator Cohen, all counterterrorist operations will get more scrutiny and this will be accomplished from the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence looking back to 1985. Senator Cohen did not believe this was Iran-contra committee subject matter. Woodward related that the POST article may contain information that he has determined primarily from staffers on the Iran-contra committee that two CIA persons that have become the focal point of the committee's concern are Dewey Clarridge and Alan Fiers.

COMMENTS: I expressed surprise to Woodward that Senators Boren and Cohen would provide an interview concerning the pending Iran-contra report. I advised Woodward that based on the information he had furnished, it appears that the Senators were making general observations about the oversight process and had not talked about the report as Woodward indicated at the beginning of his telephone call. I advised Woodward that it appeared that information concerning the Iran-contra report had come from other unidentified sources. In this regard I advised Woodward that the CIA would not be making any comments to the press concerning the Iran-contra report, especially since we had not seen the report, and the report has not yet been completed. I told

Woodward CIA comments would be preemptive and presumptive and therefore not appropriate. It appears that Woodward is fishing to confirm information he reportedly received from committee members and staffers.

I discussed my telephonic interview with Director, Office of Congressional Affairs and with Special Counsel Bruemmer. Woodward is off-base in enough areas to show that his information is not hard. For example, the review of covert actions is conducted on a monthly basis, not a weekly basis and this review had been established by Chairman Boren. OCA's recall and reading of the minutes of the meetings between the DCI, DDCI, the Chairman and Senator Cohen do not indicate several conversations concerning foreign liaison. Also, telephone calls from the Chairman and Vice Chairman regarding CIA foot-dragging are not documented.

Woodward concluded by inquiring whether DCI Webster intended to tell all to the Senate oversight committee. I informed Woodward that DCI Webster has publicly stated that his intent is to establish a strong mutual trust between the oversight committee and the Agency. I differentiated that while it might be necessary to be deceptive in conducting authorized Agency activity abroad, it was never going to be the case that deception would be used by any Agency personnel in dealing with the oversight committee. Instead, I advised Woodward that the DCI has publicly stated that he will be totally truthful and candid in dealing with the oversight committees, but that there may be an occasion when he cannot reveal information in order to protect sensitive sources and methods. If this is the case, the DCI has stated he will inform the committee of that condition.

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